

For Immediate Release

**Evan Penny: Marsyas and the Venetian Mirror**  
In collaboration with Blouin | Division, Toronto  
September 14 – October 25, 2024  
45 Ernest Avenue, Toronto, Canada  
Reception 2:00 – 5:00 p.m.

TrépanierBaer is delighted to announce *Marsyas and the Venetian Mirror* an exhibition by the esteemed international artist Evan Penny. Organized by TrépanierBaer in collaboration with Blouin | Division Gallery, Toronto, the exhibition will open September 14<sup>th</sup>.




Evan Penny's latest cycle of sculptures and photographs links to the archaic myth of Marsyas and the work Evan Penny presented in the exhibition *Ask Your Body* at Chiesa San Samuele during the Biennale di Venezia in 2017. *Marsyas and the Venetian Mirror* continues Penny's meditation on the conditions of being human in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Several monumental works including *Hanging Torso*, *Homage to Holbein* and *Self Portrait after Géricault* will be presented in retrospect along with the artist's most recent works including his gold-plated bronze body forms, AI generated works, and recent photographs.

Thirty-five (35) works, many not seen before, will be presented. Anchoring the exhibition will be the epic 3-D multimedia relief titled *The Flaying of Marsyas*. With references ranging from Penny's own photographs to Venetian painting and the colour palettes of Veronese and Tiepolo, this amalgam of painted forms and pigmented silicone is framed in a magnificent hand-crafted reproduction of a 19<sup>th</sup> century Venetian frame made by the artist. Collapsing notions of realism, abstraction, expressionism, and surrealism within a singular space, this exceptional work speaks to the paradox: "of the private self vs the public self, and the ensuing anxiety expressed in the obsessive need to reassure ourselves through a constant stream of selfies." EP

Evan Penny was born in South Africa in 1953 and grew up in Zimbabwe, the son of medical missionary parents. His family immigrated to Canada in 1962, relocating to Hay River, NWT then to Edmonton, Alberta. In 1971 he moved to Calgary where he attended the Alberta College of Art (now the Alberta University of the Arts), receiving his Honours Fine Art Diploma in 1975 and completing a further graduate year in 1976. In 1980 Penny moved to Toronto to pursue his artistic practice and where he subsequently came into prominence within Canada, producing a body of acutely observed and realized naturalistic figurative sculptures. In 1986 Penny moved to Chicago, to teach at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. After spending a year in New York in 1990 he returned to Toronto in 1991.

Through the late 80's and into the 90's, Penny shifted his practice away from his earlier freestanding naturalistic figurative sculptures to a more conceptually open-ended "body based" practice. By the 2000s, Penny had amalgamated these earlier influences and practices into the body of work that brought him international acclaim.



Recent international exhibitions include: *RESHAPED REALITY: 50 Years of Hyperrealistic Sculpture*, 2016 – 2025, traveling to venues throughout Europe, Australia, Mexico and South East Asia, now on view at the Tampere Museum Finland and traveling to the Hangaram Art Museum, Seoul, South Korea in November 2024; *ASK YOUR BODY*, Biennale di Venezia, 2017; *THE LOOKING GLASS*, Art Gallery of Alberta, 2017; *HUMAN SCALE* at the National Gallery of Canada, 2016; and 12 year survey with catalogue titled *Evan Penny: REFIGURED*, Kunsthalle Tübingen, Germany 2011-2013.

This is Evan Penny's first solo exhibition of new work in Toronto since his exhibition at the Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery in 2002.

**Blouin | Division** is a fine art gallery with a distinct focus on Canadian Contemporary art. Founded in Montréal in 2008, Division gallery is in the 80,000 sq ft Arsenal complex. Division merged with René Blouin in July 2020 to form Blouin Division gallery. The collaboration grew out of a ten-year friendship between the galleries and a shared desire to support and promote their artists. Now with locations in both Toronto and Montreal, their combined roster features prominent Canadian contemporary artists whose work can be found in museums and major institutional collections both nationally and internationally. The gallery represents over 40 artists including: Wanda Koop, An Te Liu, Geneviève Cadieux, Pierre Dorion, Tammi Campbell, Chloe Wise, Nadia Myre, and Caroline Monnet.

#### **For Further Information Contact**

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